

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VANCOU 00353 090033Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SENV, ELTN, CA US

SUBJECT: PRINCE RUPERT TO EDMONTON PIPELINE

REF: VANCOUVER 320

1. ACCORDING TO TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE PRESIDENT KEN HALL, COMPANY IS NOW STUDYING POSSIBILITY OF 36 INCH OIL PIPELINE FROM PRINCE RUPERT RATHER THAN 30 INCH LINE ORIGINALLY ANNOUNCED. ESTIMATED COST NOW DOLS. 400-500 MILLION FOR THE 830 MILE LINE TO EDMONTON. HALL SAID PRELIMINARY STUDIES COULD RESULT IN APPLICATION FOR PIPELINE CERTIFICATE TO NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD THIS FALL. MAIN DIFFICULTY TO CONSTRUCTION WILL BE OPPOSITION BY ENVIRONMENTALISTS.
2. PRINCE RUPERT MAYOR PETER LESTER IS PUBLICLY ENDORSING PIPELINE PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS ARE MET. HE POINTS OUT THAT THE PROPOSED LINE WOULD START IN THE AREA OF PRINCE RUPERT AND NOT NECESSARILY AT THE PRESENT PORT. WHILE COSTS WOULD BE HIGH, HE STATES CONSTRUCTION OF TANK FARMS ON MUSKEG WOULD PRESENT NO MAJOR CONSTRUCTION

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 VANCOU 00353 090033Z

DIFFICULTIES. (PRIVATELY THE MAYOR EXPRESSES CONCERN

THAT OPPOSITION TO THE LINE WILL COME NOT ONLY FROM WHAT HE CALLS PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS, BUT FROM FISHERMEN WHO FEAR DAMAGE TO THEIR INDUSTRY AND INDIANS WHO NO DOUBT WILL RAISE THE LAND CLAIMS ISSUE. THE PROPOSED ROUTE TRANSITS AN INDIAN RESERVE).

3. THE PROVINCE OF BC HAS TAKEN NO PUBLIC STAND ON THE PROPOSED LINE THOUGH ENERGY MINISTER DAVIS HAS MADE SOME NEGATIVE COMMENTS. EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE MEDIA HAS BEEN GENERALLY OPPOSED TO THE IDEA CITING LITTLE BENEFIT TO PROVINCE
4. FIRST POSITIVE COMMENTS ON LINE FROM BC SOURCE ARE REPORTED REMARKS BY ENERGY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDREW THOMPSON. THOMPSON, AN ENVIRONMENTALIST IN HIS OWN RIGHT, POINTS OUT THAT CHANCES OF A SPILL IN THE LESS CROWDED SEA LANES NEAR PRINCE RUPERT ARE LESS THAN IN THE CROWDED LOWER MAINLAND AND PUGET SOUND AREAS. ADDITIONALLY, THOMPSON POINTS OUT THAT DIMINISHING SUPPLIES OF OIL FROM ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN ARE CAUSE FOR CONCERN AND A PRINCE RUPERT TERMINAL WOULD GIVE BC ACCESS TO OIL SUPPLIES FROM OUTSIDE NORTH AMERICA FOR THE FIRST TIME. (PREVIOUS NDP GOVERNMENT OPPOSED OFFLOADING OF ALASKAN OIL AT BC PORTS OR IN BC WATERS. THEY DID NOT PRECLUDE USE OF ALASKAN CRUDE OFFLOADED ELSEWHERE AND FED TO BC S REFINERIES. BURGOON

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